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REACTION TO THE RHODESIAN PLAN

ANNCR: VOA NEWS ANALYST RONALD J. DUNLAVEY DISCUSSES THE INITIAL BLACK AFRICAN REACTION TO RHODESIAN PRIME MINISTER SMITH'S SPEECH OF LAST FRIDAY:

VOICE: WHEN PRIME MINISTER IAN SMITH MADE HIS MOMENTOUS ANNOUNCEMENT LAST WEEK THAT HE WOULD ACCEPT MAJORITY RULE IN RHODESIA, THERE WAS INMEDITE SPECULATION ABOUT WHAT THE REACTION WOULD BE AMONG THE PRESIDENTS OF THE BLACK AFRICAN STATES DIRECTLY CONCERNED WITH RHODESIA---THAT IS, ZAMBIA, TANZANIA, MOZAMBIQUE, BOTSWANA AND ANGOLA. THAT REACTION WAS NOT LONG IN COMING, AND IT WAS CRITICAL. IF THOSE PROPOSALS WERE ACCEPTED ---SAID THE BLACK LEADERS IN A COMMUNIQUE SUNDAY---THEY WOULD BE TANTAMOUNT TO LEGALIZING THE PRESENT "COLONIALIST AND RACIST STRUCTURES OF POWER" IN RHODESIA.

SOME IMMEDIATE PRESS REACTION INTERPRETED THE COMMUNIQUE AS A TOTAL "REJECTION: OF THE PROPOSALS OUTLINED IN THE SMITH SPEECH --- AND EVEN OF THE BASIC CONCEPTS USED BY SECRETARY KISSINGER IN HIS PLAN FOR A RHODESIAN SETTLEMENT. CLOSER READING OF THE COMMUNIQUE, HOWEVER, REVEALED THAT IT DOES NOT "SLAM THE DOOR" ON ALL THE SMITH PROPOSALS; AS BRITISH FOREIGN SECRETARY ANTHONY CROSLAND PUT IT. AND HERE IN WASHINGTON THE LUSAKA COMMUNIQUE WAS WELCOMED AS INDICATING ACCEPTANCE OF THE BASIC PROPOSALS THAT IS, MAJORITY RULE IN RHODESIA WITHIN TWO YEARS AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A TRANSITIONAL GOVERNMENT WHILE A CONSTITUTION IS BEING DRAFTED.

IN THE VIEW OF QUALIFIED OBSERVERS, THE MIXED REACTION OF THE BLACK AFRICAN LEADERS WAS NOT UNEXPECTED. THEY HAVE MADE IT CLEAR THAT THEY SUPPORT THE BASIC PRINCIPLES OF THE

KISSINGER AND CALLAHAN PLANS FOR MAJORITY RULE IN RHODESIA WITHIN TWO YEARS. BUT THE EXACT IMPLEMENTATION OF THOSE PRINCIPLES IS NO EASY MATTER. THERE MUST BE SOME AGREEMENT ON THE POINT AT WHICH GUERRILLA WARFARE WOULD BE STOPPED, ON THE MAKEUP OF THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT, AND ON ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE MEETING WHICH WOULD ORGANIZE THAT GOVERNMENT. ON THIS LAST ITEM, THE BLACK PRESIDENTS REQUESTED BRITAIN TO CONVENE THE CONFERENCE AT SOME PLACE OUTSIDE RHODESIA; THE BRITISH HAVE INDICATED THEIR WILLINGNESS TO DO SO, AND LONDON AND WASHINGTON ARE NOW IN CONSULTATION ABOUT THIS MATTER.

WHAT WE SEEM TO BE WITNESSING, THEN, IS THE BEGINNING OF A PERIOD OF HARD BARGAINING WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF CERTAIN BASIC PRINCIPLES WHICH HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE MAJOR PARTIES CONCERNED. THE NEGOTIATIONS WILL ALMOST CERTAINLY BE COMPLEX AND DIFFICULT, AND THERE MAY BE SETBACKS ALONG THE WAY. AS SECRETARY KISSINGER HIMSELF SAID LAST WEEK, AFTER PRIME MINISTER SMITH'S SPEECH, "THE STEPS THAT HAVE BEEN TAKEN ARE ONLY THE BEGINNING OF A PROCESS." BUT THE FACT REMAINS THAT THE PRINCIPLES HAVE BEEN AGREED UPON, AND WITH HARD WORK AND GOOD WILL THE PROCESS SHOULD COME TO A SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSION.

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